Governing Codes: Gender, Metaphor, and Political Identity. By Karrin Vasby Anderson and Kristina Horn Sheeler. New York and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield. 2005. 241 pp. $70.00 cloth, $28.95 paper.

Mary Christine Banwart
University of Kansas

Fortunately, in the last 20 years, the scholarship on women in politics has grown considerably, as have the number of women running for office, the number of women holding office, and thus the amount of data, artifacts, contexts, and situations to be analyzed. Karrin Vasby Anderson and Kristina Horn Sheeler, in *Governing Codes*, offer a solid, interesting, and insightful addition to this growing line of work. With the presentation of four intriguing case studies, the authors provide a rich and informative analysis from a revealing vantage point—the use of metaphor—to uncover what remains the frustrating and challenging language that four credible and politically astute women had to overcome, as well as some of the rhetorical strategies they successfully employed in doing so.

In *Governing Codes*, Anderson and Sheeler offer sound case studies that focus on four prominent female politicians: Ann Richards, Christine Todd Whitman, Hillary Clinton, and Elizabeth Dole. The authors seek to balance their study by party—two Democrats and two Republicans, as well as by experience: Two of the women were elected to their state's executive post (Richards, Whitman) and two women were spotlighted on the public stage as political spouses before moving successfully into the role of candidate in a nationally covered U.S. Senate race (Clinton, Dole).

The authors begin by building a framework that represents common, public sphere narratives about women, women as candidates, and women as officeholders. These common narratives include those of pioneer, puppet, hostess/beauty queen, and unruly woman. Although the development of these four lenses is well grounded and evidenced, one is left wondering if any positive narratives exist. Each common narrative is fundamentally detrimental, including the pioneer metaphor. Although that particular frame initially offers positive connotations, it also contains a selfish twist. For instance, the authors argue that a pioneer is a "trailblazer or groundbreaker," one possessing "determination, practical wisdom, perseverance, and hard work" (p. 14), a politician who can relate to the

"'common people, the forgotten man [sic]'" (p. 15). The authors clearly explain how this concept can quickly be transformed into a limiting narrative that delegitimizes the woman as a serious public leader, refuses her credibility as an able governing agent, and intimates that her presence in office is an anomaly rather than a position she deserves to hold. Indeed, the rationale for each lens offers progressive evidence of each narrative's existence; however, the reader is left longing for certain additional explanation regarding the lenses chosen. First, further explanation could be offered as to whether or not other narratives have been present in the literature; the presence of these four frames used is certainly substantiated, but the possibility—or lack thereof—for other frames to be present is not addressed. Second, the potential for positive or productive application of the four identified frames is never mentioned or proposed; thus, the reader is not offered an understanding as to why positive connotation is not an option from these frames.

Within each case study, the authors mine the media coverage of these women, primarily from their time in office as governor, or from their status as political spouses to their U.S. Senate candidacies. The authors illustrate not only how each of the four narratives was applied to the women, but also how the women themselves strategically used language to overcome the predominant frame(s) and fought to develop a salient, defining frame of their own. In the instance of Richards, the authors argue that Richards embraced the frame of hostess, exploiting it within the political context of her governorship through visibility and relationship building. They argue that Whitman, on the other hand, was able to overcome certain developed narratives by "confound[ing] . . . the 'double bind'" (p. 86).

Research on the Clinton case study clearly offers much data to investigate for narratives. The authors identify how Clinton herself at times readily and directly invoked opportunities for application of the frames (e.g., see their discussion of her "cookies and tea" comment). Regardless, in the cases of both Clinton and Dole, the authors demonstrate how consistently the press sought to define each woman through the use of outdated, inhibiting stereotypes that were merely audience attention getters as opposed to newsworthy items. One is left wondering about the sheer amount of time each campaign must have had to spend on developing rhetorical strategies to overcome the challenges presented by the media's sensational, self-serving, and insubstantial coverage.

At times, the authors overstep in their analysis. While they succeed in substantiating the women's strategic rhetorical choices through evidence

such as speech texts, it is risky to offer the same weight to quotations in newspapers as illustrations of the women building their own frames. In today's media environment, candidates and officeholders try to exercise control over how they are quoted in the media, as well as the slant and substance of the story itself, but ultimately, personnel at those media outlets have control over the rhetorical choices and how they are presented. Thus, we as scholars cannot justify giving full credit to the candidate or officeholder for published quotations or applaud them for their rhetorical intent just by its appearance alone. Certainly, we can tentatively credit them for their language choices, but we must recognize that in many instances, it was by good fortune that the reporter picked up the comment and quoted it.

Governing Codes is an interesting and engaging analysis that is at times both intriguing and shocking—shocking in its revelation of the type of media coverage of female politicians that persists in contemporary times. One would have hoped that by now, such exploitation of stereotypes would have been eliminated by a responsible media; the evidence here suggests that such hopes are dashed. This book clearly illustrates how imperative it is that we unveil the frequent, detrimental use of age-old stereotypes. It provides the basis for a clear understanding of the contemporary constructs that give rise to women's credible voices and respect their contributions to the public good, as opposed to the rigid, outdated narratives that are nurtured through the mass media. When used in the news coverage of female political candidates and officials, the four metaphors and their various incarnations are, arguably, easy for a media consumer to understand and process. The case studies in this book, however, illuminate an ugliness that a truly responsible and respectful media simply should not produce.

Eight Women Philosophers: Theory, Politics, and Feminism. By Jane Duran. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press. 2006. 308 pp. $64.00 cloth, $29.95 paper.

Lori Jo Marso
Union College

Searching for evidence of women's presence in the canon of philosophy, I found that the Cambridge Companion Series, an extensive and prestigious set of 110 volumes offering the "most convenient and acces-